ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS

New York

Thank you, President.

Good afternoon to all members present.

Pension matters have continued to loom large for AFICS/NY since our annual Assembly on 4 June last year. While the major concern last year was the state of a draft MoU regarding the delegation on administrative authority to the CEO and the RSG , this year the emphasis of concern has switched to a combination of Investment matters and the implementation of IPAS with its related early teething problems. Indeed, a great deal of anxiety and concern has been experienced by some with regard to the timeliness of payments. Some delays have been totally unacceptable. Consequently, pension items have been addressed and prioritized at 12 of the 14 meetings of the AFICS/NY Governing Board held over the last 12 months. To keep current information flowing to membership we have intensified emails and postings to the AFICS/NY website so that 16 separate pension related items were posted for members' information over the last 12 months. AFICS/NY representatives have also been designated to represent retirees system-wide in the Pension Board, its Budget Working Group, the Audit Committee, the Contact Group and its Asset Liability Management Committee. We have consistently used these platforms to pursue the best interests of retirees and are on record to strengthen client services, revise investment and risk management policies and drastically improve the management of key vacancies in both the IMD and the UNJSPF Secretariat.

The President, one Vice-President and individual members of the AFICS/Governing Board have met on multiple occasions with the CEO, the RSG, the USG/DM and the ASG/OHRM to voice members concerns as regards the timeliness of new pension payments, the availability of statements required for tax purposes and risk management issues under investment policies. Correspondence on these matters has also been addressed to the Secretary-General and these senior officials. Our small staff has continued, day by day, to answer individual AFICS/NY members pension queries and to put them in contact with the appropriate UNJSPF staff for problem resolution. While the quality and quantity of UNJSPF client services still leaves much to be desired we believe our efforts are paying off. The General Assembly, acting on UNJSPB recommendations formulated by the Budget Working Group approved additional client service posts. The initial backlog at March 2016 of new pensions for processing has been very substantially reduced as a result of agreements reached between the CEO of the Pension Fund and the USG/DM. The main investment classified as a hedge fund has been largely liquidated in line with members expressed concerns. Further work has been done on recruitments although this vacancy issue for senior posts in IMD remains a very serious concern. We have been assured it is receiving high level attention.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all senior officials, from the Secretary-General through the CdC and his Deputy, the USG/DM, the CEO of the Fund, the RSG for Investments of the Fund, the ASG/OHRM and UNJSPB members who have facilitated AFICS/NY in fulfilling its mandate to represent the interests of all retirees on pension matters. Their cooperation in dialoging and cooperating in Working Groups and Board meetings has been key in moving constructively and conscientiously towards positive solutions to the challenge in successfully launching IPAS. We look forward in the coming year to intensified cooperation to solve fully the remaining organizational challenges including, in particular, client service weaknesses and slow recruitment.

Warren Sach
Chair, Pension Committee